



## **New Female Motorcycle Cop is First in Boone County**

### **P.S.O. Elizabeth Campbell Crashes Through Stereotypes**

**Whitestown, Ind.** -- Pulling up on a monster, 1,100-pound Harley Davidson motorcycle, some may be surprised to see that it's a 5'4 woman under the helmet. But Whitestown Metropolitan Police Department Public Safety Officer Elizabeth Campbell enjoys the reaction she gets – especially from little girls.

“Even in a regular squad car you get, ‘Oh, that’s a girl police officer! Mom! Mom! It’s a girl!’ So that’s very cool. Then adding the motorcycle dynamic to it, I get an even stronger reaction, because it’s something they can come up to and touch and see that, yeah, I’m little, but I can do it, so they could do it too.”

PSO Campbell wasn’t always interested in becoming a police officer. In fact, it wasn’t that long ago that she was sitting at a desk at a pharmaceutical research lab, testing potential cures for Alzheimer’s Disease.

“I’m kind of a stats and research nerd.” she says, as she pushes up her glasses on her nose. “I worked to set up what we were going to test, if the medications are working, to what degree they are working, those sorts of things.” says Campbell.

Campbell has a Bachelor’s Degree in psychology, a Master’s Degree in cognitive and social psychology, and is working on her Doctorate Degree in educational psychology.

But the office life just wasn’t her style.

“Just sitting at a computer all day, kind of being isolated, that wasn’t for me. I always had a calling to serve. That’s really all I wanted to do. For a long time, I didn’t know *how* to serve people. Law enforcement or military were always things that I really thought about, but then it always got pushed on the back burner. Then one day, an opportunity to get into law enforcement came about and I thought, ‘You know, I’m just going to go for it.’ And it’s been the best decision I’ve ever made.”

PSO Campbell admits that her family and friends were a little shocked by her radical career change at first. There was no history of law enforcement in her family. “My mom worries a lot more than she ever did, that’s for sure!” she laughs, “She calls me a lot more.”

But those closest to her acknowledge that law enforcement better suits her personality. With a clear ‘protector’ instinct and ten years in martial arts, Elizabeth is obviously fierce – despite her small stature.

After joining a county law enforcement agency, she seized an opportunity to join the ranks at the Whitestown Metropolitan Police Department. She credits forward-thinking Chief of Police, Dennis Anderson, for the opportunity to be part of WMPD’s ‘Cycle Program’. Upon graduation, after two weeks of very physical training 8 to 10 hours a day, Campbell became the first female motorcycle officer in Boone County history.

PSO Campbell shrugs off the intensity of that title, saying she's just a 'regular' person who jumped at a chance.

"Chief Anderson gave me the opportunity and things just aligned. I think other females given the opportunity would do it too. Not a lot of departments have cycle programs, so that's unique to our department. The opportunity just came at the right time and everything just kind of fell into place." she says.

Elizabeth's father has always loved motorcycles too. In fact, her dad gave her a motorcycle as a high school graduation gift. They built it together, spending hours side-by-side in the garage. Sadly, she had to sell it to pay for graduate school. Now, her dad's eyes light up when he sees his daughter pulling into the driveway on her big, purring Harley, which weighs roughly the same as eight baby rhinoceroses. He even enjoys sharing tips about how to keep the bike looking its best. (She used Pledge to polish the body just before our interview.)

PSO Campbell admits she's pretty blown away by the power of the machine she now drives 'at the office'. "The things these motorcycles can do in such a short distance and under low speeds is just amazing. It's been an awesome experience in a lot of different ways." she says.

An experience she wouldn't trade for anything.

"Kids will come up, they want to see it, they want to play with the lights. People who ride motorcycles come up and want to talk about it. It's just nice to be able to engage with the community like that on a different level. That's probably been the best part for me. That's been very rewarding. I enjoy it a lot more than I ever thought I would."

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